

## **California first in the nation to require diesel vehicle manufacturers to go electric**

By Cresencio Rodriguez-Delgado

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In a historic move, California on Thursday became the first state in the nation to require manufacturers of diesel trucks and vans to transition to all-electric sales by 2045.

Inspired by the state's ongoing efforts to curb pollution, members of the California Air Resources Board voted unanimously in favor of the decision. The board heard from more than 100 speakers before voting during a virtual meeting.

The Advanced Clean Trucks Rule targets pollution from heavy diesel vehicles in the state's most polluted areas, often poor neighborhoods surrounded by highways, ports and warehouse distribution centers.

Zero-emission trucks are expected to be on the road by 2024. Manufacturers will need to increase the number of cleaner vehicles each year, leading up to 100% zero-emission vehicles by 2045.

The state has, in recent years, pushed to electrify many of its vehicles.

The new rule lays out different expectations of sale rates for different types of diesel vehicles like pickup trucks, school buses, tractor-trailers and delivery vans. By 2035, for example, half of pickup trucks and delivery vans will need to produce zero emissions.

The air resources board estimates 70% of smog-causing pollution comes from diesel trucks despite those vehicles accounting for 2 million of the state's 30 million registered vehicles.

The vote was welcomed by residents from areas of the state heavily-affected by pollution, like Los Angeles and the San Joaquin Valley.

In south-central Fresno, community advocates have consistently pushed for cleaner air and called for a reduction of heavy-truck traffic near highways and warehouses.

Shayda Azamian, a climate policy advocate with Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability, said the industrial areas south of Fresno would see a difference thanks to the new rule.

"The trucks that we are seeing in front-line communities in Fresno definitely apply," Azamian said. She said residents in the area have even called her to say there is too much noise along with bad air.

Azamian said advocates would leverage the rule in land use discussions with city and county governments to maintain clean air standards.

"The hardest fight is locally," she said.

CARB board member Diane Takvorian also hailed the rule as a win for minority communities, especially at a time of social unrest. She said addressing environmental issues for communities is a positive step toward equality.

"This rule advances racial justice," she said. "In a time when we are talking about that every day, we need to recognize that these types of heavy-duty vehicles disproportionately impact communities of color, communities around ports and this rule is going to give the relief."

Takvorian noted the effects of the vote wouldn't be seen immediately, but that it also contributes to the state's projects in cleaning up the air in specific communities identified as disadvantaged and disproportionately impacted by air pollution.

In February, the board approved a south-central Fresno plan to reduce emissions. It is one of two plans currently in place in the central and southern San Joaquin Valley.

"This (rule) is critical," Takvorian said. "We have to do this as a board if we want to have success."

The air resources board is eyeing a 2021 date to hear from large fleet owners about their transition progress.

CARB members acknowledged possible hesitance from manufacturers to produce electric trucks.

Two new rules down the road will supplement Thursday's vote, including making sure heavy-duty trucks have effective exhaust technology to limit smog as they transition to electric.

"It's amazing that here we are in 2020 and we can see a path to getting rid of diesel for heavy-duty purposes," said CARB member Hector De La Torre.

## **Authorities brace for a potentially dangerous Fourth of July**

By Jason Oliveira

ABC 30, Thurs., June 25, 2020

FRESNO, Calif. (KFSN) -- As the 4th of July approaches, local authorities are bracing for what's expected to be a busy and potentially dangerous holiday.

"We may not be able to get to every single call that comes in but we will be responding to every call that we can respond to, prioritizing those to fires first," said Ted Semonious with the Fresno Fire Department.

Law enforcement says they've already received a number of complaints of people setting off illegal fireworks.

This year sees a combination of factors that could lead to more illegal activity: the holiday falls on a Saturday, more families are staying home, and most professional fireworks shows have been canceled.

That's why authorities want to remind everyone of the dangers associated with fireworks.

"If you're going to use fireworks, only use safe and sane fireworks and only use them in the manner they were intended to be used," says Semonious.

Safe and sane fireworks are expected to go on sale this weekend in most Valley cities.

If you're caught using illegal fireworks, expect a hefty fine.

"You're going to get a \$1,250 citation. We can impose either misdemeanor or felony charges as well based on what you're doing and the quantity you have," says Jay Tracy, also with Fresno Fire.

Although most public fireworks shows have been canceled this year, experts with the Air Pollution Control District recommend those with respiratory issues avoid neighborhood displays as well.

"At ground level, it's immediately going into the windows of your home, it's just traveling around your neighborhood where your family lives and breathes. It will have an adverse impact on their health," says Heather Heinks with the Air Pollution Control District.

Experts also warn that face masks will not prevent harmful emissions from fireworks from entering your body.

"Particular matter is teeny-tiny, it's microscopic, it can be inhaled through your lungs and go deep into your bloodstream and it will go right through these cloth face masks," says Heinks.

## **Smoke Hangs in the Air as Valley Fires Trigger Health Warnings**

By Randy Reed

GV Wire, Thurs., June 25, 2020

Smoke drifting across the Fresno area from a large pallet fire in Reedley and nearby wildland grass fires is prompting health warnings from local air quality officials.

The fire at fruit packaging manufacturer Maxco Supply broke out early Thursday and continued to burn throughout the morning.

That led to a "health caution" from the San Joaquin Air Pollution Control District.

### **Smoke Carries Dangerous Particulate Matter**

Smoke from fires produces fine-particulate matter (PM2.5), which can cause serious health problems including lung disease, asthma attacks, and increased risk of heart attacks and stroke,” the district warned.

“People with existing respiratory conditions, young children and elderly people are especially susceptible to health effects from these pollutants.”

The previous day, the air district said smoke from the Sycamore Fire, burning southeast of Tollhouse, and the now-contained Frontier Fire south of Prather were also creating health risks.

“Anyone experiencing poor air quality due to wildfire smoke should move indoors, to a filtered, air-conditioned environment with their windows closed,” officials said in a news release.

### **Real Time Air Monitoring Tool Available**

The air district said residents can monitor air quality conditions in their local area using the agency’s online Real Time Air Advisory Network (RAAN) tool.

CalFire said the 19-acre Sycamore fire was 90% contained as of Wednesday and the 40-acre Frontier Fire 100% contained.